

I Entered Knowing Not Where

I entered where I knew not,
and I remained not knowing,
all knowledge transcending.

I had no idea where I was going,
but, when I saw myself there,
great things did I understand;
I will not say what it is that I felt
for I remained not knowing,
all knowledge transcending.

Of peace and of godliness
was the perfect knowledge,
in profound solitude
understood straight along;
it was something so secret,
that I was left stammering,
all knowledge transcending.

I was so saturated,
so absorbed and remote,
that I was dispossessed of all reason;
and my spirit was endowed with
an understanding of not understanding,
all knowledge transcending.

He who arrives in that place,
his *self* falls away;
however much he knew at first
much less does it now seem;
and his knowledge grows so much,
that he is left not knowing,
all knowledge transcending.

The higher he climbs,
so much less does he understand,
it is the cloud that is obscured
that at night becomes illuminated;
so it is that he who knew
remains forever not knowing
all knowledge transcending.

This knowing without knowing
is of such great dominion,

that the learned men disputing it
can never overcome it;
for their knowledge does not reach
the understanding of not understanding,
all knowledge transcending.

This loftiest knowing
has such great merit,
that there is no university or knowledge
that can undertake it,
he who knows how to triumph
with a mastery of not knowing
will *always transcend* .

And if you wish to listen,
this highest knowledge
consists of a most excellent sense
of the divine Essence;
it is an act of clemency
to make us remain there not understanding
all knowledge transcending.....

~ St.John of the Cross ~